



PENVELO
SUMMIT BICYCLES

Newsletter – December 2018

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SAN BRUNO MOUNTAIN HILL CLIMB

Don't miss the first race of the season on Tuesday, January 1, 2019 (severe weather cancels).

Registration: Bikereg.com Registration and parking in Brisbane at the corner of Guadalupe Canyon Parkway and Bayshore Blvd. The course is 7-8% up Guadalupe Canyon, right turn into San Bruno Mountain County Park, through the tunnel under Guadalupe Canyon to Radio Road with narrow switchbacks and grades to 10%. Total distance is 3.5 miles. See course on Strava: [Course Map on Strava](#). Prizes are cash and/or merchandise, awarded to top 3 in each category. Medals for top Juniors, Men's Cat 5 and Women's Cat 5 (picked separately from W3/4).

Extra incentive this year: If the fastest time of the day beats the overall course record, you will win an additional \$200 cash prize. Current course record is 14:20 for men and 16:34 for women. If fastest time for each category (eligible for prizes) beats the category course record, you will win an additional \$50.

Membership Renewals

If you haven't already renewed your membership, now is the time! It takes only a few minutes. The club and race team signups are on the same form.

<https://penvelo.webconnex.com/PV2019>

The Suffercave Blog

- by Andrew Horvai

Part 2: Hardware.

This is the second in a series of opinion pieces about indoor training. If you missed last month's introduction, I suggest you read that first. The discussion aims to provide some recommendation for those who do a substantial amount of their riding indoors. Again, if you want a deeper dive into the details of individual hardware components, I suggest DCrainmaker's reviews: <https://www.dcrainmaker.com/>

The single guiding principle for the below recommendations is a setup that works every time with minimum hassle. To put it another way, I just want to jump on and TRAIN, not move bikes around, swap tires or rear wheels, not troubleshoot electronics.

Q. OK, enough theory, what should a dialed-in suffercave consist of? 1-3 are required, 4-10 are optional on preference, budget and space

1. **Smart trainer** – This is the heart of an indoor system. "Smart" implies that through wireless protocols (BT smart or ANT+) there is external control of trainer resistance on-the-fly. Direct drive (you remove the rear wheel and attach the chain to the trainer) is preferable though more expensive than wheel-on trainers. The disadvantage of wheel-on trainers include

- calibration before every ride
- need for an indoor trainer tire
- noise
- tire slip against the drum on sudden, hard accelerations. This can cause a so-called "death spiral" as the trainer tries to compensate for the slip by providing MORE resistance in turn generating MORE slip

I started with a wheel-on trainer and switched to a Wahoo KICKR (2nd gen) for the above reasons. After a year of problems including overheating, sensitivity to ambient light and thermistor failure, I settled on the Tacx Neo and would buy one again. A second generation of the Neo was released as I write this which allows for a larger variety of rear hub spacing. Regardless of what you chose, I warn everyone not to expect a smart trainer, however expensive, to be a lifetime purchase. These things are wear items.

2. **Fan** – you can't go too big. I like an industrial fan like the Lasko 20" floor model (2265QM-20). Connect it to the wall outlet with a wireless switch (IR remote or Bluetooth that you can control with your phone). Depending on how hot you get, a second fan placed at a slightly different angle is good. You

want these pointing at your chest for most effective cooling. Your goal should be to have sufficient evaporative cooling to not need a frame protector over the top tube. Those things get in the way of your hands and pedalling. Wahoo makes the HEADWIND fan that can be controlled to match your virtual speed or effort. I don't see the point, but if you have \$250 to burn, go for it!

3. **Something to control the smart trainer** – a small form-factor Win10 PC in the \$300 range is perfect unless you plan to do Zwift at high resolution (see later blog on software). Though there is MacOS, android, iOS support for MOST software, it tends to lag behind Windows. An old laptop (Windows7 generation) will work. You can control a smart trainer with your bike headunit too but it's more of a pain and the PC gives you entertainment options while also controlling the trainer. Usually these small form factor PCs come with a wireless mouse and keyboard but if not, a combined wireless keyboard –trackpad will be needed for setup.

5. **LCD screen**– The size is going to depend on how far it is from your eyeballs. You're going to be staring at this thing for hours at a time, sometimes with multiple windows open while your vision blurs from the efforts. I'm about 36" from the screen so 42" 1080p is almost too large. Any larger and it's out of my field of view. I don't stream any content at 4K and 1080p is adequate to read text. If you're using a laptop, you already have a screen just be careful it is placed on something sturdy so you don't accidentally knock it over. There is buzz of VR goggles for indoor training but nothing on the market yet. Sweat will be an issue.

6. **Mounting hardware for screen and PC:** Depending on your setup, you can wall mount the LCD screen and PC. If you have a laptop, you can use a dedicated stand (Wahoo makes one) or a makeshift one from an ironing board, music stand or something creative made of PVC. For a tablet or phone, there are handlebar mounts (more on that below). Since I work out in the garage, I use a floor stand that is built for console gaming. This gives you shelves to store headphones, keyboard and other items. An advantage here is that the entire setup is "portable." For example: <http://a.co/d/4ArquLE>

5. **ANT+ USB dongle with USB extension.** A dongle is a USB stick antenna that allows the PC, tablet or phone to communicate with your smart trainer. Smart trainers communicate on either BTsmart or ANT+. While many PCs have built-in Bluetooth they do not necessarily have built-in BTsmart. Phones and tablets more often do. However, I recommend ANT+ over BTsmart. The range of these wireless protocols is theoretically enough to reach from the PC to the trainer but this assumes no signal interference. For an extra 10 bucks you can get a 6-10 foot USB extension and place the dongle a few inches from the trainer. One less problem to solve later.

7. **Bluetooth headphones.** You can of course use the sound coming from your LCD display or laptop/tablet speakers but keep in mind the fan and trainer will make some noise and the combined volume may piss off other people. It's nice to be able to reach up the headphone and crank the noise during hard efforts and back it off during rests. Your call.

8. **A little table or shelf next to bike.** To hold extra water bottles, food, TV remote, fan remote, PC keyboard and mouse, towels, Kleenex etc.

9. **Smartphone handlebar mount.** Various options available. I made one of these (<https://blog.trainerroad.com/custom-phone-mount/>). If you go this route, do not buy a case that fits your phone perfectly. Buy a case slightly **LARGER**. This way, you do not have to remove your phone from the case you usually use. You simply set the phone+case into the mount on the handlebar. The phone does not need to be super snug, your bike is going to be locked into a trainer. Even if you use a PC to control the trainer and for entertainment, you will want access to all your phone aps. I also use my phone as an input device for the PC while riding (to be discussed next time under Software). If your fan control is BT, then you'll need the phone for that.

10. **A dedicated trainer bike.** Two schools of thought here. One is that you should train on the bike you race. This is especially true to dial in the positioning on a TT or Tri bike. However, the counter-point is that having the bike permanently mounted to the trainer means all you have to do is hop on. No removing wheels, or tuning rear derailleurs that don't match the offset of the trainer cassette. Also, there is some grumbling on forums about carbon frames not playing nice with being twisted inside a trainer. The theory goes that you are putting twisting forces on the rear triangle that normally would be transferred to the spokes, rim and tires. Who knows? There is also the N+1 rule. The only requirement for a trainer bike is its measurements (stack, reach etc) match your outdoor bike as much as possible.

11. **Floor mat.** This is primarily to keep sweat, sports drink and other crap off your floor but also provides some cushioning for the trainer.

12. **Rocker platform.** Now we're really getting into the optional hardware. Until recently, these were DIY and ranged from a few tennis balls under the trainer feet to complex platforms with elastomers or inflatable cushions (search YouTube for "indoor trainer rocker platform" to see examples). Now commercially available units are popping up:

<https://bit.ly/2FmqEB0> and <https://bit.ly/2PUyWo1>

The idea is to allow roll and pitch and maybe even a little yaw as you pedal. Theoretically this makes standing efforts more realistically like outdoor riding. Jury is still out on whether they are worth the money.

13. **Wahoo KICKR CLIMB.** This is a one-off invention that has no competition in the marketplace. Paired with a KICKR, the CLIMB (<https://bit.ly/2zbs3oN>) can simulate road incline automatically depending on user or software input. Obviously, you could get off the bike and put a bunch of risers or books under the front wheel, but this device does it on the fly electronically. Whether it will work with a rocker platform remains to be seen. Like the HEADWIND, I think you can get adequate training without it. But if you like software that simulates outdoor riding (more about software next time), the CLIMB might be for you.

Meet Bill Brissman



My first encounter with organized cycling was a flat 1972 Century and at 13 I completed the event in a time of 9 hours, 30 minutes. By 1974, I had a racing license in the Amateur Bicycle League of America, the national governing body at the time. Things were very different then. Five step freewheels were navigated from downtube shifters with an overshift-and-trim technique that is a lost art today. Italian leather shoes were held to pedals with toe clips, straps, and slotted cleats that were nailed on by the local shoe shop; placement was critical, there was no adjustment. Components were either French or Italian, and besides the pricey Campy side pulls, all brakes were center pull. Wheels required a quick truing before every ride. I could spend many paragraphs on this, but suffice to say, times have changed for the bicycle.

So too has racing changed. Fields in the '70s regularly filled at 100, even in the Juniors, and some prize lists were pretty large. I recall winning a custom frame as first place in a Junior criterium in Carbondale, Illinois. Of course, there was also the desk lamp as first prize in another race... I had fairly good regional success as a Junior based in Indianapolis, but just managed mid-field finishes at the Junior Worlds trials due to a variety of factors including fitness and newbie-ness. I did win a couple of state road and track championships as a junior, and then found my way to Indiana University. The flat cinder track, standard issue bike Little 500 team race became an all-consuming passion. Joining the team that had won 4 of the previous 5 annual races, expectations were high for our all-freshman team, but we ended up in a humiliating 10th place, 2 laps down in front of 25,000 peers in the stands. That summer, there were rumors of a bike racing movie (Bambino, later retitled Breaking Away) being shot in Bloomington, and I got plugged into a part riding for the antagonist in the climactic scene (spoiler: I lose). As a sophomore, junior, and senior I



Little 500 1979- huge crowds filled the stadium.

started and finished for my team in the actual race with winning results. Wearing our

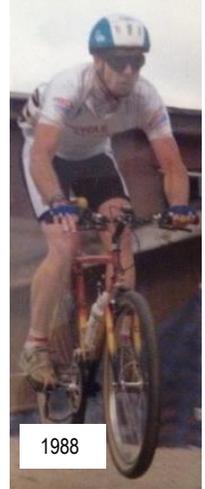
championship rings, we all enjoyed minor celebrity status on campus, along with some loathing from others who would love to have filled our shoes.



Little 500 1981.

myself in Los Angeles, making new friends in bicycle circles riding road bikes, track, and on (rigid) mountain bikes.

Job changes bounced me between SoCal and the Bay Area twice during this second chapter, and I got connected with Pen Velo when I moved back for good in 1992. I served as the Treasurer for several years, and the club was about 50 in membership rolls, but perhaps half that in committed racers. I was a capable Cat 3 crit racer. I made it a point to always come away with at least one prime per race, but was just having fun, not reaching for the stars. My two girls started growing up, needing soccer coaches and theatre involvement, so I let my license lapse again in 2000.



1988

Continuing to ride but not race throughout this time, it was 14 years later when I was a virtual empty nester that I thought I'd see about racing again in the 55+ District Crit. There have been ups and downs since, but this chapter has not been completed to my satisfaction. We'll see where the rest of the story takes me... Thanks for reading.





See the podium photos below. Don't forget to submit your podium photos by no later than January 2 to be included in the January newsletter. Please be sure to wear your current Pen Velo jersey when racing and on the podium. Podium photos do get sent to sponsors and are also included with other marketing content. It's a great way to showcase our team results and ensure visibility of the investment our sponsors have made in Pen Velo. Action shots and your personal stories are also welcome. Submit via email to: social@penvelo.org.

November podiums



**BASP #1 Coyote Point
November 4
Trevor Bartlett Open B - Single Speed – 1st**



**SacCX 45C
November 4
Terry Nilsen 2nd**

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